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Statement by Mr. John J. H. “Joe” Schwarz

Title: On Introduction of *The Science and Mathematics Education for Competitiveness Act*

Date: May 11, 2006

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce today the *Science and Mathematics Education for Competitiveness Act*. The bill expands and strengthens math and science education programs at the National Science Foundation and the Department of Energy to improve the math and science literacy of our nation and prepare our young people for the high-tech, high-wage jobs of tomorrow.

President Bush, in his State of the Union Address, articulated the link between math and science education and national competitiveness. I agree with the President. Like him, I want to ensure that the 21st Century remains “the next American Century.” And, like him, I want to ensure that Americans continue to enjoy the highest standard of living in the world.

The jobs of today require a higher level of math and science skills than ever before. The jobs of tomorrow will be even more demanding. And we know that the rest of the world is not standing still. In an increasingly globalized economy, our children and grandchildren will be competing with highly-skilled, highly-educated workers around the world for high-wage jobs in high-value-added industries. I want to make sure that those industries and those jobs stay here in America. To do that, our nation’s business leaders tell us that we have to boost the math and science skills of American students.

I know of no better way to improve math and science education in this country than to build upon the successful programs of the National Science Foundation and to expand the ability of some America’s most brilliant scientists and engineers in the Department of Energy to lend their talent and expertise to the education of U.S. students.

In crafting my bill, I focused on what already works and I sought to minimize the creation of new programs. Based on testimony offered in a series of hearings in the Science Committee, and on recommendations offered in a series of reports by American business and academic leaders, my bill focuses on encouraging more teachers to specialize in teaching math and science, and encouraging more college students and advanced degree students to pursue math, science, and engineering majors.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that so many business and educational organizations have endorsed my bill, including AeA (formerly the American Electronics Association), the Telecommunications Industry Association, the Electronics Industry Association, the Council on Competitiveness, the Battelle Memorial Institute, the American Chemical Society, the National Education Association, the National Science Teachers Association, the National Council of

Teachers of Mathematics, the National Science Teachers Association, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, the American Association of Physics Teachers, the American Geological Institute, the Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics Education Coalition, the Council of Graduate Schools, the Association of American Universities, and a host of other organizations. I am grateful for their support. Together, we can ensure that America remains the most competitive nation in the world.